SPARK GAP

Vol. 42, Issue 1, January 2025 *MARC - Serving Central Indiana Communities*

On Our M.A.R.C. :

Please join us Saturday, January 18 at 8 am for our January 2025 MARC monthly meeting at the Johnson County REMC building, 750 International Dr. in Franklin. This month, Ken Barr KD9ALA will present "DIY Plastic Bending" so plan to attend. Winter Field Day will be held at Joe Vergara's KA9ZPA January 25th this year.

Plan to participate or stop by. See you at the meeting Saturday.

73,
Tim

2025 Winter Field Day January 25 – 26

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

KB9BVN – Brian Murrey
N9EJR - Jim Williams
KB9UJE - Matt Payne
KC9ZMV - Cliff Whitrock
WB9EZL - Earl King
KC9WLL - Joseph Krebsbach
KC5GHM - Josh Kiilu
K9PDI - Keith Cohoon
KD9REP - Michael Straub

Weather Ops-ervations

by KC9NJM

It has been hard to miss the somber news coming out of California since Tuesday, January 7th. It was on that day that the first of a series of raging wildfires was reported in Pacific Palisades. That fire and a second, the Eaton fire near Pasadena, have resulted in the loss of human life, the evacuation of over 150,000 residents, and the destruction of over 10,000 structures. At this writing neither of these fires is contained and threat of additional spread is feared.

While the exact cause of the initial fire has not been determined, the major contributing factors are the extremely dry conditions in southern California coupled with extremely strong Santa Ana winds. With only negligible rain in the last eight months, the area is covered with dry vegetation that has been fueling the fire. And with unusually strong winds gusting at times up to 100 mph, live embers were driven widely across the region.

Santa Ana winds originate in the Great Basin of the United States, which sits higher than the area they impact in California. These winds flow from the interior of the US toward the lower pressure area along the coast. As they traverse downhill through the passes and canyons, their speed is increased and what begins as a cold wind becomes hot and dry. While the Santa Ana winds are a common occurrence, the strength of the ones that have driven these fires have been compared to those of a hurricane.

The conditions giving rise to the Palisades and Eaton fires, as well as others in the area are something of perfect storm, which has resulted in the burning of over 35,000 acres. The loss of human life is immeasurable and the property damage is being estimated in the billions of dollars. Over the past months and years the weather disasters impacting our country have been set around tornados, damaging straight-line winds, hurricanes, and tropical storms. The events in California of the past week should certainly make all of us keenly aware of the diversity of the forces of nature.

Sources: NWS, NBC News, CAL Fire, USA Today

Ham Radio Operators Serving During California Firestorms

…..... ARRL NEWS January 2025

As the firestorms across Southern California continue to threaten millions of residents, trained amateur radio operators are serving critical volunteer roles to help officials spot fires before they get out of control. Dry conditions and wind gusts of 100 miles per hour have fueled days of devastating wildfires. Entire neighborhoods have been leveled by infernos.

The Eaton fire burned to the top of Mount Wilson, a critical logistical post for broadcast radio and television stations, as well as communications across the Southland. Federal agencies, air traffic control, local emergency responders, radio amateurs, and others all share tower space on the mountain.
While the main fires have been burning north and northwest of the central section of Los Angeles, just to the south, hams are standing watch. Orange County Fire Watch (OCFW) is a program locally organized by the Orange County Parks Department and the Irvine Conservancy.

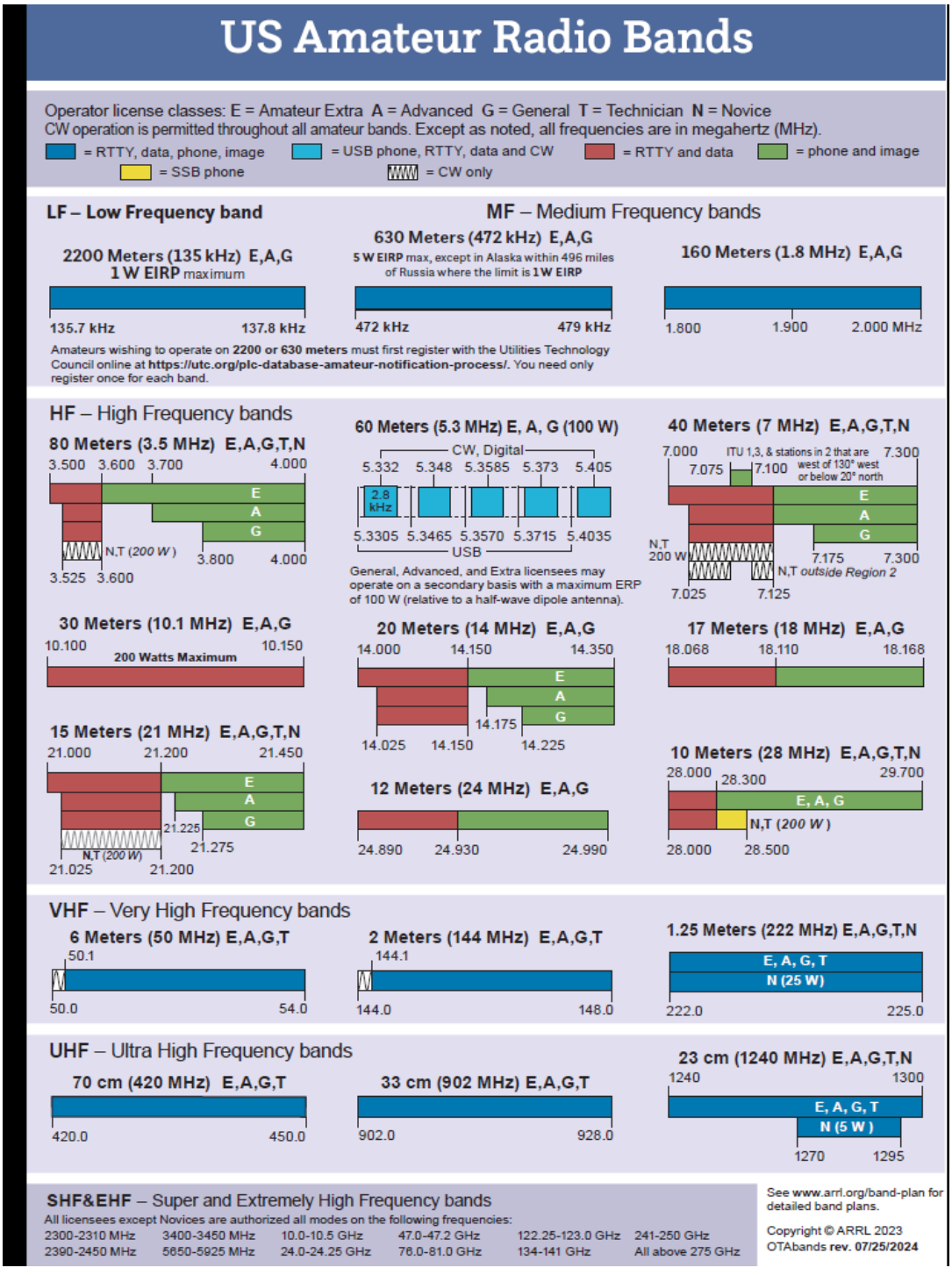
During severe fire weather, volunteers go to preassigned locations within parks and open spaces to report conditions. Many of them are hams, using the amateur radio bands to fill in mobile network weak zones. ARRL National Instructor Gordon West, WB6NOA, is among the deployed volunteers. He said hams are stepping up. “We’re all over the ARRL Orange Section on hilltops, reporting the wind and humidity, ash seen coming down, scanning for spot fires (none so far), smoke from the LA fires, guest activity at the parks, and being a presence at trailheads with reflective vests and vehicle signs indicating Fire Watch,” he said.

Ray Hutchinson, AE6H, is a retired Firefighter who serves as the chief radio officer for Fire Watch. He says local clubs are key to providing the needed RF infrastructure. “Our local club, the South Orange Amateur Radio Association (SOARA), an ARRL Special Service Club, provides linked 2-meter and 70-centimeter repeaters: one high level and one coastal, for use by OCFW hams during deployments. There is a formal OCFW Net Control Station (NCS) for the entirety of these events," he said.

Radio amateurs are also ready and able to serve at evacuation centers, providing support as needed. Members of ARRL Headquarters staff have been in touch with ARRL volunteers and other ham radio groups around the affected area, and are offering material support for any activations. “It has been a busy start to the year for ham volunteers,” said ARRL Public Relations and Outreach Manager Sierra Harrop, W5DX. “Whether it’s firestorms or ice storms or any other need, ARRL volunteers selflessly serve their communities. We’re mindful that large-scale events like this impact the hams who are active serving,” she said.

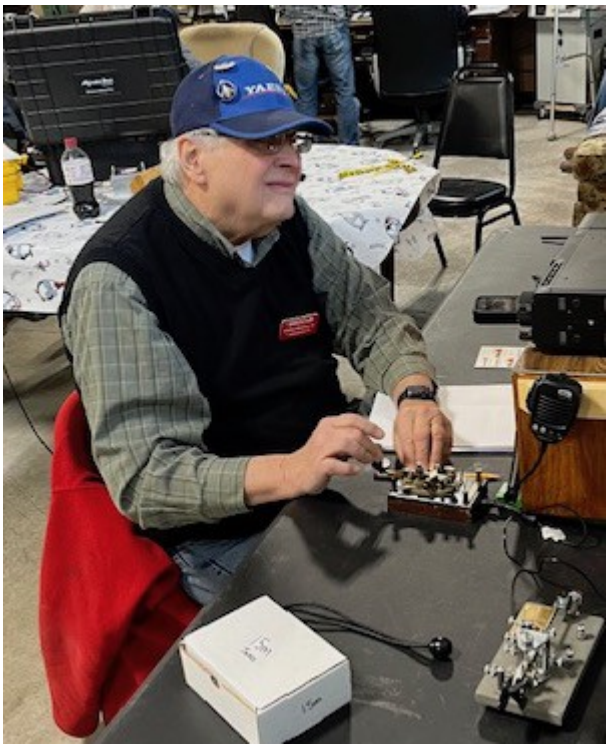
ARRL Director of Emergency Management Josh Johnston, KE5MHV, has been on calls with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and other served agencies, offering ARRL resources. Efforts are being coordinated locally by Emergency Network Los Angeles (ENLA), the Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) group in Southern California.

Johnston urges hams in the affected regions to be ready to take care of themselves and their families before needing to deploy. He points to resources shared by ARRL's Amateur Radio Emergency Service® (ARES®) during National Preparedness Month. "These are stressful events for everyone, and being a ham volunteer is really second to keeping yourself and your family safe," said Johnston.



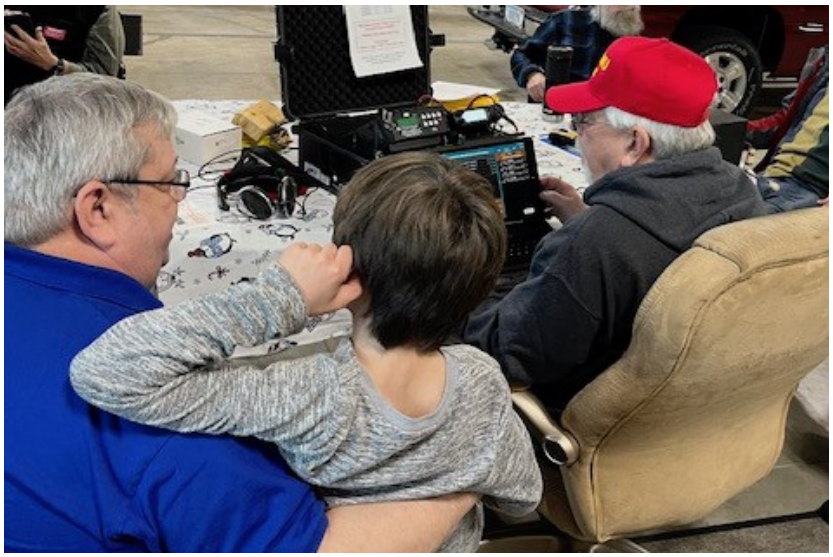
ARRL KIDS DAY

January 4,2025



WC9G

Mid-State Amateur Radio Club
MARC



MID-STATE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

The Mid-State Amateur Radio Club meets the THIRD SATURDAY 8:00 AM of each month at the Johnson County REMC building 750 International Dr. Franklin, IN 46131

See our website, www.midstatehams.org, for maps on how to get to our meeting.

Everyone is welcome; you do not have to be a *HAM* to attend our meetings or a member of the club.

W9MID Repeater:
Offical SkyWarn Repeater for Johnson County

146.835/
146.235 MHz
(151.4 Hz PL Tone)

W9MID Repeater:

443.525/
448.525 MHz
(151.4 Hz PL Tone) YEASU SYSTEM FUSION (C4FM)

Club Officers:

President: Tim Aldridge - WC9G
Vice President: Rhonda Curtis - WS9H
Secretary: Jim Adams – KB9JMU
Treasurer: Jacki Frederick - KI6QOG
Repeater Trustee: Chris Frederick – KQ9Y
Club Historian: Art Bleicher – WB9CHR
Club P.I.O. : Rhonda Curtis – WS9H

Weekly Net: Sunday evening 7:00 PM ARES/RACES members and ALL RADIO AMATEURS
146.835/146.235 MHz (151.4 Hz PL Tone)

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857 Lionshead Lane
Greenwood, Indiana
46143
Spark Gap Editor: Robert LaGrange N9SIU

Please send your articles to my email: n9siu@yahoo.com no later than the 3rd week of the month.

Thanks to Johnson Co. REMC for the use of their building for meetings and testing.

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